

## **Standard 4000-06**

### **Vocabulary**

Vocabulary is critical to comprehension. Students must know what individual words mean within the context of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Research suggests the proportion of difficult words in text is the single most powerful predictor of text difficulty; a reader's general vocabulary-knowledge is the single best predictor of how well a reader can understand text.

Research shows the average second grade student has a reading vocabulary of about 2,000 to 5,000 words, yet the materials he/she will read in third through ninth grade contain approximately 90,000 different words. According to the best estimates, students need to learn approximately 3,000 to 4,000 words per year just to stay on grade level. The California State Board of Education (1999) recommended that students in early grades read 500,000 to 1,000,000 words per year. Vocabulary acquisition is related to the amount of reading students do both in and out of school.

There are four types of vocabulary: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Most students whose primary language is English enter kindergarten with speaking vocabularies ranging between 2,500-5,000 words. Generally, first graders can orally use and understand about 6,000 words but have very limited reading vocabularies. By second grade, students' reading vocabularies are growing steadily, with students learning an average of 3,000-4,000 words a year. It would be impossible to teach this number of words directly each year. Thus, it becomes critical that teachers provide explicit vocabulary instruction, motivation, and reading opportunities to develop word knowledge.

The following are possible suggestions and not all-inclusive:

#### **Teacher Delivery**

1. Read aloud challenging text from a variety of genres.
2. Provide explicit instruction on content-specific vocabulary.
3. Provide instruction on vocabulary within the content area being studied.
4. Provide sufficient practice opportunities with vocabulary.
5. Provide and promote opportunities for students to independently read from a variety of genres to expand vocabulary.
6. Provide explicit instruction on word structure (e.g., affixes, root words).
7. Provide instruction to deepen students' understanding of vocabulary (e.g., semantic feature analysis, word synonyms, antonyms, multiple meanings of words).
8. Provide explicit instruction on high-frequency words.
9. Provide access to resource material (e.g., dictionary, thesaurus).

## **Standard 4000-06 Vocabulary (Continued)**

### Assessment

Formal:

Approved state, district, and school assessments.

Informal:

1. Observe for complexity of vocabulary usage as students read, speak, and write.
2. Informal assessments of vocabulary.

### Differentiation

1. Provide a print-rich environment for students to read materials that reflect their interests and maturity levels.
2. Provide opportunities for students to read in content areas where they can apply knowledge of content vocabulary.
3. Present material that matches students' instructional reading levels.
4. Provide opportunities to extend students' speaking and listening level of vocabulary beyond their reading level.
5. Allow students to use multiple resources for vocabulary support.
6. Allow for additional experiences and practice with vocabulary.
7. Allow students to work with a peer.
8. Provide visual and kinesthetic experiences with vocabulary.
9. Provide direct instruction on grammatical features and idioms.
10. Provide simplified text as needed to reinforce vocabulary instruction and word recognition.
11. Support ELL students with vocabulary acquisition by providing:
  - Vocabulary in native language with connections to English.
  - Opportunities to work with English speaking peers.
  - Instruction on grade level concepts (animals, weather) and functions (walk, quiet).
  - Cultural references of vocabulary.

### Home Connection

1. Encourage parents to provide time to read together as a family and engage in conversation.
2. Encourage parents to provide experiences and discussions on concepts, observations, and materials read or viewed.

**Standard 4000-06 Vocabulary (Continued)**

Home Connection (Continued)

3. Encourage parents to provide opportunities that encourage vocabulary development through promoting reading, by visiting the library, bookstores, and discussing environmental print.
4. Encourage parents to monitor children's time spent watching TV, playing video games, and/or surfing the Internet.
5. Encourage parents to have nightly reading for pleasure in the home.

